

The Cake Lady

By Mildred White



TESSIE LOUISE was making a great deal of trouble. From the time her invalid mother had brought Tessie to the city hospital to be treated for her spine, the golden-haired baby had been the pet of the nurses. And as her stay was prolonged, partly because the mother was too ill and too poor to yet understand the care of her child.

"What in the world," asked the autocratic young house doctor, "does that child want?"

"Tessie wants a Nora Christmas doll," the nurse said eagerly.

Doctor Bruce wrinkled his brow.

"What does she mean?" he asked.

"Miss Nora Dean," the girl answered, "is a young woman who visits the children's ward and has been much interested in them. She lives in a cottage out on the lake shore, and last summer she came in and took two of our little convalescents for a month's stay there. Tessie Louise was one, and she so fell in love with Miss Dean at the time that we could hardly



coax her back. But it was necessary that she should come. Yesterday, Miss Dean came to the hospital with a basket of Christmas cakes, made like dolls, with currant eyes, and colored frosted dresses. The kiddies were so pleased; they call her the Cake Lady.

Doctor Bruce frowned.

"That's bad practice," he complained, "allowing women to come in here and feed our patients. I did not suppose—"

The pleasant nurse hurried to champion her friend.

"She has helped us in many ways. I should call Miss Dean a philanthropist if she were not—"

The pleasant nurse paused, "in humble circumstances herself."

"The young woman you speak of lives on the lake shore?" the doctor asked.

The nurse nodded.

"Her uncle was an old sea captain," she told him. "Miss Nora made her home with this uncle and aunt when she was as small as Tessie here."

"Now she lives on in the house at the water's edge to take care of her aunt, who is old and crippled. And still that girl—"

The pleasant nurse choked up unaccountably.

"Well, she's always trying to do things for others," she finished; "that is the way Nora Dean finds happiness."

"Great Scott!" interrupted the doctor, "there goes Tessie again; that noise must be stopped. She must not disturb the sick ones."

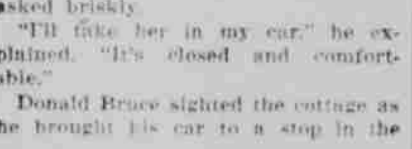
The prettiest nurse came hastily.

"Tessie says she won't stop until she is taken to Miss Nora. I really wish we had made arrangements yesterday to have her driven out to the lake shore for over Christmas."

"How far out is it?" Doctor Bruce asked briskly.

"I'll take her in my car," he explained. "It's closed and comfortable."

Donald Bruce sighted the cottage as he brought his car to a stop in the



roadside. Then he gathered his small charge in his arms and made his way to the white door.

"Come in," Nora greeted cheerily, "the nurse phoned me of your coming. There's a new Christmas doll for Tessie Louise in the oven, and a lot more to take back."

It was a broad, white kitchen, redolent of sugar and spices, and an old lady in a rocking chair near the window relieved Tessie of her wrappings.

"You must give the doctor a cup of coffee, Nora dear," the old lady said, "before his cold drive back to the city."

But Donald Bruce seemed in no hurry to return.

"This," he said noisily, "smells like my grandmother's kitchen. Used to spend our Christmas with grandmother when I was a boy."

"We are going to have a roasted chicken for dinner," the old lady suggested tentatively—"I wonder if it might not seem just a bit like being at grandmother's—if you'd stay and eat with us?"

It was remarkable how swiftly the afternoon hours flew in the lakeside cottage.

"I'm so glad," the old lady whispered at parting, "that you decided to wait to take Tessie back with you. It has been a happy Christmas for Nora. I can see it in her eyes, and usually happiness is only Nora's through the giving. She's the dearest girl in the world."

"She is just that!" Donald Bruce answered solemnly.

His eyes were on Nora as he slipped the old lady's hand.

Mr. and Mrs. Howard Parker visited in Ithaca Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Tucker of Alma visited at the Tucker home Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Roy Seaman of Alma were entertained at the home of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. R. D. Seaman, Sunday.

SUMNER

Mr. and Mrs. Howard Parker visited in Ithaca Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Tucker of Alma visited at the Tucker home Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Roy Seaman of Alma were entertained at the home of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. R. D. Seaman, Sunday.

L. Conklin is in Maple Rapids on business this week.

Geo. Wilkins has returned from Pontiac where he has been employed.

Mr. and Mrs. Abner Conner visited relatives in Ithaca Sunday.

Dr. Graham of Alma is treating Samuel Cleveland who is quite ill at this writing.

Chas. Mangus and family of Beaverton called on his mother, Mrs. Mangus, Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Seaman entertained relatives from Flint over Sunday.

Hugh McKinstry returned Saturday night from a two weeks visit with friends in Chicago.

The "Arizona bow boys" gave their play at Vestaburg Friday night and at Elwell Saturday night they reported a fine crowd at each place.

Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Nelson of Elwell visited Sunday at the home of Mr. and Mrs. H. Church.

Jesse Teed and son transacted business in Alma Friday.

Rev. M. Cottrell was in Muir Saturday on business.

Mr. and Mrs. Glen Mewan from Grand Rapids visited over the week end with Mrs. Mewan's mother, Mrs. Mangers.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Harrington of Greenville spent Sunday with Mrs. Harrington's aunt, Mrs. C. A. Pratt.

I. F. Tucker was in St. Charles on business Friday and Saturday.

Floyd Black and family of Sherrard visited his parents, Mr. and Mrs. C. F. Black.

Miss Eva Lang of Detroit visited her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Lang, last week.

Mr. and Mrs. P. A. Klees went to Grand Rapids this week to attend the meeting of the State Grange.

Emmett Faber of Flint is here this week calling on friends.

Mrs. R. M. Forquer left this morning for Missaukee to visit her son, Bert, and family.

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Seamon were in Carson City calling Thursday.

Elmer Garner of Ionia is moving on the labor farm which he has rented for the coming year.

Mr. and Mrs. John Robson were callers in town Thursday.

Austin and Jeff Lang were in Alma on business Thursday.

John Ferris was in Mecosta the first of the week on business.

Wm. Hill of Carson City was a business caller in town Monday.

Laurence Donahue was in Alma Tuesday.

The I. O. O. F. Degree team went to Ithaca Monday night to put on the degree work for the Ithaca lodge.

Mr. Frank Caswell of Alma was called here the first of the week by the illness of his father-in-law, Mr. Gorton.

Arthur Forquer was in Grand Rapids last week on business.

Mr. and Mrs. Cyrus Nickerson and daughter, Mina, and Mr. and Mrs. Vance Woodward were in Carson City on business Thursday.

Mr. and Mrs. John Church and Mr. and Mrs. Vance Woodward visited Sunday afternoon with H. E. Church and family of Alma.

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